

The title of my presentation was not one I chose. I got to this conference and to the newspaper article that got me to this conference, the same way I get most everywhere, in my job, in my daily life: through a series of conversations. I volunteered for something that looked entertaining to me, and I talked to people while there. I volunteered for making paper Christmas tree ornaments and helping to decorate a tree representing the Library where I work amongst a display of community Christmas trees. I am continually amazed and amused by what I get paid to do, and what other people don't want to do. While decorating the tree with some of my like-minded co-workers, the local newspaper's assigned reporter came over to chat with us about our jobs, the library, and the tree. As we were the only people decorating at the time, and we were a little late, we got the newspaper article. From that conversation, the reporter, Alyssa Harvey, asked to do another article about my job. Now, I love my job, but it seems that no matter how much the Library advertises it the public is unaware that we offer this service, so I was delighted by the chance. I hung out with Alyssa for a couple of days, as I went places, visited people and delivered their books, and then, as he was scheduled differently, I hung out with the photographer, Bac Totrong for half a day... and proceeded to ramble on to them about what I do for my library job.

I probably couldn't be doing this presentation, if I wasn't able to think of it as a conversation with several people I got to meet during the course of a few days. I used to get in trouble in school for talking to people. People were too interesting to me to not talk to, so I'd keep talking to them longer than I should. I couldn't figure out what I wanted to do as a career. I turned down a job at my local home town library, Madisonville, after high-school. The Library and its people had known me there for at least 10 years, since we had moved there from Ohio. I left for Bowling Green and Went to WKU... still didn't know what I wanted to do professionally, I studied History, French Language, and Photojournalism.

I talked to people, got a job in retail after having a conversation with a friend there at the fabric store. Retail had some points I liked, the 'making people happy' aspect I found charming; A lady in her 40's once skipped out of the store when I was able to get 3 more yards of a fabric she was using that we had sold out of from another store. The fabric store got me lots of conversations with sweet older ladies, who would come in and talk for about half an hour while buying a pack of needles. They didn't want needles, or probably even need them. They wanted conversation. They would show me fabric swatches, quilt pieces and pictures of grand children in sewn Halloween costumes. Except for the heavy lifting, and the growing dislike for the Holidays, which now started in June, I found it to be bliss. Over time, I had a few conversation with a friend who came into the fabric shop. It happened that, at that time, she was assistant director of the library where I now work. I applied for a job at the library in

circulation that I saw in the paper, because even if I still didn't know what I wanted to do for a career, I knew that being in libraries made me happy.

Library work had the 'gratifying wants' aspect of retail, with less of the lifting heavy objects, and just a smidge of the 'wrangling about money'. While working in Circulation, I met Roseanne Phillips, my predecessor in Home Delivery, and she told me about her job. She was retiring soon, she told me, and that's when I started stalking her job. It had all the things in a job that I had enjoyed previously, flexible settings, work outside the building, variety, talking to people, making them happy. When she retired and handed off her job to me, she had been doing her job for around 15 years. Before her, Warren County had had other people who did the job as part of other jobs, for about 2 years. She was the first specifically hired for Home-Bound Delivery. Just before I got the job, Home-Bound Delivery had traded the huge Econoline Van for a Nissan Quest. Before I took to the streets of Warren County in the Quest, I asked the library for a few things, which they cheerfully granted. I got Business Cards, like real career people, brochures for the service, and a name change, To Home Delivery (in my opinion, people who were stuck at home didn't need to be reminded that they were, and I wanted it to feel like a luxury service, like food delivery, instead of incarceration).

Most aspects of the Home Delivery Service I inherited from Roseanne. The work shift is Monday to Friday, 9 to 5. Home Delivery patrons also aren't really fond of change, so I tried to do anything differently gradually. The Home Delivery Service in Warren County is set up generally on a 2 week schedule. New people are added to the schedule on days amenable to them, on a day with deliveries to other people near them if possible. Most people are called once in 2 weeks, with exceptions for avid readers who call and are fitted in openings in the schedule, or agencies who prefer a 4 week schedule. My range is all of Warren County. Most of my people are in single dwelling homes, though I have some apartment buildings, retirement homes, assisted living facilities, nursing facilities, and mobile homes. Most of my people are also older, though I have some younger patrons with disabilities or illnesses. Home Delivery can also be joined on a temporary basis, such as surgery recovery. Most of my people call me, though I have some who email. Most of my people want Large Print Fiction books, or audio fiction cds. Some want non-fiction, true crime, biography or non-fiction. Some also want to learn how-to download movies; some checkout the Nooks we have; some have me explain nuances of technology; sometimes we just sit and talk about life over tea.

The main attitude of Home Delivery is flexibility. I have a schedule; I call the people on that day's schedule, between 9:30 and 10:00. If people are available, we set a time for the Delivery. If they don't need books yet, I renew their books, and encourage them to call me when they get close to done with their items. If they aren't available on the day they are scheduled, we arrange for another day more convenient for them. I put them on the calendar for the day we have

decided on, and I give them a reminder checking call on the day when it arrives. I personally feel that while it is a useful service, people shouldn't feel like they get one time slot and that's it. The nature of the various situations of Home Delivery patrons makes it necessary to rearrange often.

I try to have as many ways to be accessible to my people as possible. I have an office extension at the Kirby branch Library where my desk is. I have a cell phone. Both have answering functions on them, and I encourage people to leave messages. I don't answer while driving, or while visiting another person. I have a work e-mail, though not many patrons use it. My contact information is on my business cards, and my brochures. I try to also get my people to leave messages with anybody who answers when they call the Library, as some are confused by the phone system.

So now that I have gotten people on the schedule, I want to keep them engaged, interested and excited to see me. I might be the only person they see for days, but that is no excuse to slack. I want to not just bring them books, I want to bring them Exciting books. I want them to be happy to see me. I want to lift their mood, even if for just the time I see them, to give them something to which they look forward. So, I have 'a Treasure for Everybody' theory. I want to bring everybody at least one item that will be exciting to them, that I can talk up on the phone when I call. The New John Grisham, another book by that author they liked last time, at least one book with a "New" sticker on it, a new author to try. I find something to talk up. I make this trick work with my unreliable memory by taking notes, either in my Android phone, or a tiny notebook as my predecessor used. I also use Novelist to find them things similar to the other things they enjoy.

I want to find out more about them. These are all interesting people, who have had rich lives. They have probably used and enjoyed the library all their lives, and just have trouble getting there. We can't abandon them now! I have had one lady who used to work for the State Department. When she died, she was in the process of writing her biography, which a friend of hers has in custody, and I hope she eventually publishes. I had another lady who lived until 93, and talked about how excited she was about all the changes that had happened in her lifetime. I had a gentleman who used to receive books along with his wife, who had now passed on. They had adored antiques, and he would tell me about their things, as I stacked up his 2 week batch of books, 2 stacks of 6 deep in a corner of the beautiful living room in Smith's Grove. I had a lady in a nursing home, who would talk about volunteering for local election rallies and campaigns with such pride, and feistiness. I like to get them to talk about themselves because they are interesting, and also because it will give me clues as to what they might enjoy reading but aren't telling me.

That's another issue. People don't always tell you what they want. They might feel embarrassed, or think its too much trouble for you to find. I had a lady with a beautiful, gentle Georgia accent, who secretly wanted Ann Rule and

true crime, but was not feeling up to telling me. I finally worked up through gentle, cozy mysteries, gentle funny theme mysteries, through Kinsy Millhone, and on to Patricia Cornwell, till finally we made it! Blood, Treachery, Adultery, Murder! Her eyes were bright with glee.

I want to give people books they want to read, but sometimes, its just as important to talk up a book or two, so they will look on them favorably to start. I tell them what other people have told me about the book, like mini reviews. If they are the first person with the book, I talk that part up, that they will 'have to tell me what they think, so I can tell other people.' I usually tell them, "I wish they were all wonderful, but I can't guarantee it". I bring them a few more amount-wise than they requested. Some people somehow think it would be rude not to read all the ones you bring, kind of like a literary 'clean the plate' club. I explain often that if a book isn't very good, they should just set it aside, and try the next one. If they run out of good books early, they should call me, and I will bring them new ones. A lot of people 'don't like to make a fuss' or 'hate to bother you'. I try to convince them that them calling me keeps me out of trouble and gives me something to do. I am their tax dollars at work .

Some people will mark up the best seller list and hand it to you. I find it important to write the name of the person on it almost immediately, so annoying not to have a memory. I will give people what they requested, and then usually 2 or 3 new people who I think they might like based on their requests, even if they tell me they only like certain people. Sooner or later they are going to run out, and if I can find them even one more person, the easier it will be to deliver to them. I had one lady who Only wanted to read Fern Michaels. No, Really. Eventually, there was nothing left of Fern Michaels. I would try other authors, or would call her when a new Fern Michaels came out, but it just didn't do it for her. We had to part.

I have an Awesome module for the Polaris Checkout program my Library uses, an Outreach module. You can check outreach for a patron record, and it will then start recording titles that the account has had since that point, and add an automatic query to ask if you want to check it out to that patron, if they have had it before. Back in the day, Roseanne used to encourage people to put their initials in the front of the book, so she and they could keep track of which books they had had. These days, we have more than one copy of most books, so the initial trick wouldn't work anyway. The Outreach module also lets you list genres, and authors that the person prefers, and will let you form lists and put books on hold that way. Before, I used to put blocks in accounts with preference lists, and Roseanne had put notes in the schedules by the person's name.

While I am out and about, talking and visiting my people, I make notes every once and awhile as we talk. People joke about it when I do it, and I joke about it, too. "Do you see me writing it down? No? Then I won't remember it later." I frequently will have notes on my hand. I carry a fine-point Sharpie, also useful for writing on people's Best Seller list cuttings. I use an Android Note, and run

Evernote on it. Free, synchs on all devices and Desktop. Before, I used Wundernote, same great, free price. Evernote also does well if you are doing clippings, so in my life, Wunderlist is superfluous, but not disliked. I also have a random brain, so my brain matches up things people say, with things my brain finds similar. I make notes to try those things, too. I deal in volume, so if some things don't work, I move on.

Notes. As I have mentioned, My World revolves around notes. My brain spins things out, and gets caught in loops, unless I write whatever it is down, and sometimes whatever it is is useful. If not, it's at least out. I keep a log of sorts, of what I am doing, or where I am in a thought. I really Enjoy Dave Allen's "Getting Things Done" book, and use the system with Notebooks inside Evernote, and Location lists, so that I can keep track of where I am and record thoughts as I think of them, even for projects in other aspects of my life.. So, say Lady Y asks for the new John Grisham book. I put her on the hold list, but then it also reminds me, and I note in the log that Mr. J. would also like that book, and Mrs. H. will need it on audio... 3 people happy, one note.

Office time, pretty rare, but essential. The holds get placed, Novelist gets searched, book suggestions get ordered, ILL orders get filed, I check the library's new books to see what someone might enjoy if no one has handed me the Best seller list lately. Office time lets me be generous on non-office days. I love being generous! Novelist now lets you search by plot points, types of characters, types of story. I had a man who used to work in security. I brought him Lee Childs and some of the other spy-like books.. He really just liked the lone-wolf, competent-man faces adventure stories, more the Jack London or some of the Westerns. The new aspects of Novelist could have helped me there. I find also useful Amazon and Goodreads.

My library gives me a desk, and I have 2 sections of 5 shelves each, one for each week. I have the shelves labeled for the days, and I check things out to my people and label them with their hold slips, rather like out in the circulation area. When I check books in from the days' returns, I make stacks on my desk of anything that isn't on Hold for non-Home Delivery patrons. I find it quite easy to quickly see what returned books are next for whom. It's like shopping for relatives, or the friends they fast become. I prefer to shop a day or 2 ahead, but this is not a perfect world. I see where I have empty spots on my Hold shelves, and fill them from the floor. A treasure or two, as good as I can for the rest, plus usually one or two wild-cards, books that haven't circulated for a while, or something I don't now if they will like, but nothing ventured, nothing gained.

On most days, I am packed and out by 11:00. I have plastic shopping baskets from the old Library name, Bowling Green Public Library as opposed to Warren County Public Library. According to how many items a person wants, one basket carries one person's items, or 2, in separate Home Delivery Tote bags. The Tote bags have my business cards on the handle. I can stack 4 full baskets on a folding rolling cart that belongs to Home Delivery, sometimes 5 if I am not

feeling like making another trip. I am fairly strong, so your results might vary. I roll it all out and load the ORogue (some lady rear-ended the Quest). I let my people set the tone and duration of the visit. Sometimes people just want their stuff and want me to get out. Sometimes they are bummed, and I attempt to jolly them, even if I manage only a little. I get them to talk about the books I brought, to see which they liked and maybe why they liked them. What they might want more of, less of. Some people might show me what they are doing in their lives, some are sewers, or artists, or gardeners. Visit.

One of the things I do, more and more often these days, is introduce some of my people to their technology. Some get gifts from relatives, or buy them themselves but then don't know how to use the things. I have introduced people to their Kindles or Nooks, or the Nooks that we check-out, to playaways, (I have had a couple of converts, no skips, no changing disks, lightweight wear with headphones). I have a movie-junkie lady who Loves romance movies, and watches them on Hoopla now. I have shown people how to attach or file grandchildren's pictures, how to use Android tablets. I am a one woman technology-tutor with a smile. And really, spending 20, 30 minutes if you have the spare time, they already know and trust you. It only takes a few minutes more, and they are so grateful.

I help people get on to the Talking Books from the state Library as well as my service. I have or have had people who used both my service and theirs. You get completely different titles, or so they tell me. I have helped people who were moving get on with the delivery service if there was one where they were going. I think it was comforting to the both of us to know that some would be there to take care of them. The more people that take up Home Delivery Services, the better I will feel about people moving out of my region.

Now we come to some topics that are sad. Home Delivery, by its nature, is populated mainly by older, frailer people. I lose people, through natural attrition. Home Delivery must constantly advertise, both to keep our service filled, and to help those people who have no relatives to look out for them. I get circulation people, and Mobile to tell people who might be having trouble, or talking about having surgery, or having difficulty getting around about Home Delivery, and what it can do. I put brochures up on community bulletin boards, apartments, Senior Centers. I carry brochures with me as I drive around, both in my library job, and in my private life. Some of my best advertising is word-of-mouth. You can't do better than that, when people recommend you to other people. I used to have a lovely lady at a retirement home, who had been a business woman when she was out in the world. She used to say to me 'Well, I got you another one', proud of the good job which she had done.

People disappear. The phone will not be answered, or it will be disconnected, or no one will answer your knock. I put block notes in the account, with the date I noticed it. I will try for a couple of schedule cycles. Sometimes you will get a call from a relative, or them, telling you they are in the hospital, or rehab.

Sometimes they don't come back. I have gotten calls from relatives, or other people clearing a room because of the business card tags on the Home Delivery Bags. Once a month, I check names for obituaries. Libraries are set up to acknowledge some level of material loss. We declare the items lost, and I am sad.

I have solved some problems, to my and my Library's satisfaction. But some are still vexing, and I will share them with you to see what you think. I would like to have another phone number or way to contact people who know my Home Delivery person, but some people have no one else, and I would hate to bring that up to them, yet again. It is not so terrible for the library to lose items, as it is for me to lose friends. I also find it difficult to get still more people for Home Delivery, and would like to know your thoughts or strategies. Do keep in touch, share what you think. I can never have too many friends, or conversations.